



# Doma Vaquera The Original Cowboy

## Doma Vaquera: a bit of history

Doma vaquera is the style of riding developed for working cattle ranches and evolved from a style called jinete. Doma means training, vaquero means cowboy from the Spanish vaca for cow.

Ranching and the cowboy tradition originated in Spain, out of the necessity to handle large herds of grazing animals on dry land from horseback. During the Reconquista, members of the Spanish nobility and various military orders received large land grants that the Kingdom of Castile had conquered from the Moors. These landowners were to defend the lands put into their control and could use them for earning revenue. In the process it was found that open-range breeding of sheep and cattle (under the Mesta system) was the most suitable use for vast tracts, particularly in the parts of Spain now known as Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura and Andalusia.

Over time, most of the cattle ranches in Spain have given way to agriculture, and the few remaining ranches raise fighting bulls. The Spanish vaquero rider more often than not is working with aggressive and dangerous bulls requiring that his skills are carefully honed and his horse is particularly skilled, athletic and brave. With many of the large ranches disappearing, doma vaquera has been developed into a competitive sport and art form.



## Spanish North America

When the Conquistadors came to the Americas in the 16th century, followed by settlers, they brought their cattle and cattle-raising techniques with them. Huge land grants by the Spanish (and later Mexican) government, part of the hacienda system, allowed large numbers of animals to roam freely over vast areas. A number of different traditions developed, often related to the original location in Spain from which a settlement originated. For example, many of the traditions of the Jalisco *charros* in southern Mexico come from the Salamanca *charros* of Castile. The Vaquero tradition of Northern Mexico was more organic, developed to adapt to the characteristics of the region from Spanish sources by cultural interaction between the Spanish elites and the native and *mestizo* peoples.

## United States

As settlers from the United States moved west, they brought cattle breeds developed on the east coast and in Europe along with them, and adapted their management to the drier lands of the west by borrowing key elements of the Spanish vaquero culture.



Photo: Paco Aranda

## History of the Jinete

*Jinete* is a Spanish word meaning "horseman", but in some cases this is applied to the horse, the rider or both.

As a military term of art, *jinete* (also spelled *ginete* or *genitour*) means a Spanish light horseman armed with a javelin, sword and a shield, a troop type developed in the Middle Ages in response to the massed light cavalry of the Moors. Often fielded in significant numbers by the Spanish, and at times the most numerous of the Spanish mounted troops, they were proficient at skirmishing and rapid maneuver, and played an important role in Spanish mounted warfare throughout the *Reconquista* until the sixteenth century.<sup>[1]</sup>

At the modern working cattle ranch of Spain and in Central America, the jinete style of riding is similar to doma vaquera with differences in the maneuvers.

[1] <http://en.wikipedia.org>



Photo by: Paco Aranda

## Vaqueros

In the Great Basin range cattle industry, the vaqueros came first--not Anglo or black cowboys, but Hispanic California horsemen. In the Spanish colonial days before the cattle business developed, vaqueros worked mostly for hide and tallow companies in California. Later, as Anglo ranches and herds were being built up, the European-American pioneers employed Mexican vaqueros, and the vaquero traditions of horsemanship, equipment, and language greatly influenced other working cowboys. By the time the open-range cattle business reached its heyday in the generation after the Civil War and family and corporate ranches were thriving in northern Nevada, *vaquero* was the word used for *cowboy*. The legacy of expertise imparted by the oldtime vaqueros lives on in Paradise Valley, in the ríatas and horsegear made by traditional "rawhidlers" like Frank Loveland and the everyday use of Hispanic California-style, center-fired saddles with "taps" covering the stirrups.

Vaquero (from the Spanish vaca for cow) is the obvious source for buckaroo, and the oral testimony of ranchers adds significantly to the understanding of how buckaroo was Anglicized from vaquero. Reinforcing conversations at his reinforcing two years' time, Leslie Stewart (grandson of William Stock, the German who developed the 96 Ranch) wrote me a letter in February 1980 summarizing his own experience this way:

"The word "Buckaroo" sprang from the Spanish word "Vaquero," as you know "V" is pronounced "B." Even in the time I can remember the word Vaquero was used much more than Buckaroo, finally it was corrupted to Buckaroo. The word was not brought in by any specific group of early settlers as the Spanish word originated country was settled.

The early Spanish Grant owners in California used the word for their herdsmen and horsemen in the time of the first settling of California and when it was still owned by Mexico... The Spanish style and custom of working cattle spread into Nevada, Oregon and Idaho. Hence the Vaqueros or Buckaroos came with them. Even in this area in early days a large percentage of the riders were Mexicans or California Mexicans, especially on the larger outfits.

"One of my early, and fondest memories, is of the Circle A round-up crew annually coming up through our meadows on the way to the fall round-up. They had a Chuck Wagon drawn by six mules, a "Caviada" of many horses and 8 or more Mexican riders. They would generally stop here to get some eggs, potatoes, any other fresh garden produce that might be available and especially as much fresh homemade bread that my Mother might have for them."

## SOME OF THE MOVEMENTS IN DOMA VAQUERA

- Leg yield, half pass,
- full pass, pirouette,
- rein back
- half turn on the haunches,
- canter in circles,
- flying changes,
- sliding stop



Valter Santos

## CAMPEONES DE ESPAÑA DE DOMA VAQUERA 1970-2003

AÑO	JINETE	CABALLO	RAZA	CAPA	LUGAR
1970	J. M <sup>o</sup> Maestre y Lasso de la Vega	Aleada	P.R.E.	Alazana	C. Pineda (SE)
1971	J. M <sup>o</sup> Maestre y Lasso de la Vega	Aleada	P.R.E.	Alazana	Jerez (CA)
1972	Rafael Jurado Castillo	Malandrín	P.S.I.	Castaña	Jerez (CA)
1973	Alvaro Domínguez Romero	Río - Pío	A.H.a.	Torda	C. Pineda (SE)
1974	José Tirado Cerrada	Diamante	H.a.	Torda	Jerez (CA)
1975	Luis Ramos Paül	Llerel	A.H.a.	Torda	Sevilla
1976	Luis Ramos Paül	Llerel	A.H.a.	Torda	Sevilla
1977	Luis Ramos Paül	Jaleo	A.H.a.	Castaña	Jerez (CA)
1978	Luis Ramos Paül	Jaleo	A.H.a.	Castaña	Sevilla
1979	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Golondrina	A.a.	Castaña	Sevilla
1980	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Centenaria	P.R.E.	Torda	Sevilla
1981	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Centenaria	P.R.E.	Torda	Sevilla
1982	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Centenaria	P.R.E.	Torda	CH. La Dehesa (M)
1983	José Tirado Cerrada	Noche y Día	A.H.a.	Castaña	Oliva de Fra (BA)
1984	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Miandango	A.a.	Alazana	C. Hípico (CO)
1985	Ignacio de la Puerta García-Corona	Gitarrero	A.H.a.	Alazana	C. Hípico (CO)
1986	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Miandango	A.a.	Alazana	Dos Hermanes
1987	No se celebra C. Española por peste Equina				
1988	Antonio Jiménez	Valduque	A.H.a.	Alazana	Medina C. (VA)
1989	No se celebra C. Española por peste Equina				
1990	Antonio Quinta Casas	Júncia	A.a.	Torda	C. Hípico (CO)
1991	Rafael Román Postigo	Cortafuego	A.H.a.	Castaño	Pz. Toros (SE)
1992	Alfonso Martín García	Trapero	A.H.a.	Castaño	Huelva
1993	Antonio Quinta Casas	Galá	P.S.I.	Castaño	El Rocío (HU)
1994	Francisco Díaz Rodríguez	Israel	P.S.I.	Alazán	Castro del Río (CO)
1995	Francisco Díaz Rodríguez	Israel	P.S.I.	Alazán	C. Pineda (SE)
1996	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Mississippi	A.a.	Alazán	C. Pineda (SE)
1997	Francisco Díaz Rodríguez	Israel	P.S.I.	Alazán	Paterna de Rivera (CA)
1998	Rafael Román Postigo	Española	S/F	Alazana	Fuengirola (MA)
1999	Rafael Román Postigo	Chaparrón	A.a.	Ruana	ECUMAD (M)
2000	Alfonso Martín García	Retama	A.H.a.	Torda	Carmona (SE)
2001	Manuel Rodríguez González	Enamorada	Cruz	Castaño	Málaga
2002	Juan Carlos Román Postigo	Poseidón	A.a.	Torda	Sevilla
2003	Joaquín Olivera Peña	Turronera	Cruz	Alazana	El Rocío (H)

## Asociación Nacional de Doma Vaquera

<http://www.andv.es/>